

Webber House
621 Lockerbie Street
Indianapolis
Marion County
Indiana

HABS No. IND-54

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. IND-54

WEBBER HOUSE

Location: 621 Lockerbie Street, Lockerbie Square Historic District,
Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana.

Present Owner: None.

Present Use: Demolished

Statement of Significance: The Webber House is a typical example of Indianapolis domestic architecture of the late nineteenth century. Located in the Lockerbie Square historic district, this simple two-story frame structure is representative of working class residences of the period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: About 1873. It is difficult to determine the date of erection because the original parcel of land, Lot 4, is divided into three parts. Two of these front Lockerbie St. at the north, and each has a small house on it. The remainder of the lot fronts New York Street on the south and now has only evidence of a building foundation. According to the city directories, it appears that Lockerbie Street had not been constructed as far east as Lot 4 until sometime between 1871 and 1873 (Swartz & Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1872-73, Indianapolis, 1872; Swartz and Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1874, Indianapolis, 1874). In 1867 Amos D. Krewson bought all of Lot 4 for \$2000 (Town Lot Record 33, p. 389) and sold a portion of the lot at the northeast corner to Jane M. Webber for \$2200 (Town Lot Record 69, p. 334) in 1873. This price indicates that a house stood on that portion of the lot at that time.

There is record of the purchase of Lot 4 in 1851 for \$155 (Deed Book BB, p. 21) and its sale in 1852 for \$1000 (Deed Book CC, p. 291) indicating possible construction on the property at that time. However, it seems unlikely that either the Webber House, or its neighbor of similar age to the west, would have been built then. Any building would have been at the south end of the lot near E. New York Street.

The city directory of 1873 lists George H. Webber living at 75 Lockerbie St. (Indianapolis City Directory, Swartz and

Tedrowe's, 1873, Indianapolis, 1873). This is the first listing for him at this address and the first listing for that address.

2. Architect: Unknown

3. Original and subsequent owners:

1851 Warranty Deed, September 27, 1851, recorded September 29, 1851 in Deed Book BB, p. 21.

Timothy R. Fletcher

to

James Gentta

\$155 for Lot 4 (48' frontage on Lockerbie St. and 190' deep).

1852 Warranty Deed, April 14, 1852, recorded October 21, 1852 in Deed Book CC, p. 291.

James Gentta

to

Indiana Central Railway Co.

\$1,000 for Lot 4.

1852 Deed of Trust, November 10, 1852, recorded November 27, 1852 in Mortgage Record Y, p. 591.

Indiana Central Railway Co.

to

Stephen Dillingham and Samuel Hannah

The railway mortgaged Lot 4, along with much other property, as security for a bond issue.

1855 Warranty Deed, November 10, 1855, recorded May 10, 1856 in Town Lot Record 4, p. 287.

Samuel Hannah and Stephen Dillingham

to

Willis W. Wright

\$1160 for Lot 4.

1858 Warranty Deed, May 6, 1858, recorded May 8, 1858 in Town Lot Record 7, p. 329.

Willis W. Wright and Francis F. Wright, his wife,

to

James McKinley

\$1600 for Lot 4.

- 1866 James McKinley died intestate May 26, 1866 and left Alexander McKinley, Mary Hanlon, Oliver S. Keely, Catherine Keely, and Elizabeth Williams as heirs at law (See Complete Record 24, p. 359, Common Pleas Court).

Personal estate only is evaluated; this at \$258.

- 1867 Warranty Deed, August 19, 1867, recorded September 24, 1867 in Town Lot Record 33, p. 384.
Elizabeth Williams, daughter and heir at law of James McKinley of Illinois
to
Amos D. Krewson of Ohio

\$400 for one fifth part of Lot 4.

- 1867 Warranty Deed, August 7, 1867, recorded September 24, 1867 in Town Lot Record 33, p. 389.
Alexander McKinley, Mary Harlan, Oliver Keely and wife Catherine Keely, William Keely and wife Sarah Keely, heirs of James McKinley
to
Amos D. Krewson

\$2000 for Lot No. 4.

- 1873 Warranty Deed, November 12, 1872, recorded June 17, 1873 in Town Lot Record 69, p. 334.
Amos D. Krewson et ux.
to
Jane M. Webber

\$2000 for portion of Lot 4 at the northeast corner, having 24' frontage on Lockerbie St. and a depth of 78'.
No record of a will or any administration of the estate of Jane M. Webber.

- 1888 Quit Claim Deed, July 13, 1888, recorded July 13, 1888 in Town Lot Record 202, p. 132.
George H. Webber
to
Robert Cumback

The same portion of Lot 4.

1969 Warranty Deed, February 5, 1969, recorded February 5,
1969 Instrument No. 69-6100.
Indiana Central University
to
Mary Tarzian

The same portion of Lot 4.

4. Original plan and construction: Rotary saw marks were seen at the exposed corner studs of the northeast corner of the building. Some machine cut nails were found here where the corner trim was missing. Other exposed studs showed band-saw marks.
5. Alterations and additions: The shed-roofed section at the rear is an addition. The front porch columns, in the Tuscan Order and the concrete floor of the porch, appear to be later additions.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The Webber family was first associated with this house. John H. Webber was a blacksmith at the C. H. & I. Railroad shops (Indianapolis City Directory, Swartz and Tedrowe's, 1873, Indianapolis, 1873). In the 1874 Directory Miss Emma Webber, clerk, was listed as living in the house (Swartz and Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1874, Indianapolis, 1874). Frank and Charles R. Webber, firemen for the C. H. & I. Railroad, also lived there (Swartz & Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1876, Indianapolis, 1876).

C. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deed Book BB, CC.

Mortgage Record Y.

Town Lot Record. 4, 7, 33, 69, 202.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Indianapolis City Directory, Swartz and Tedrowe's 1873, Indianapolis, 1873.

Swartz and Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory 1872-73,
Indianapolis, 1872.

Swartz and Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1874,
Indianapolis, 1874.

Swartz and Tedrowe's Indianapolis City Directory, 1876,
Indianapolis, 1876.

2. Likely sources yet to be investigated: The deeds for the other three parcels of Lot 4 might pinpoint the date of construction of the Webber House a bit more closely.

Prepared by Wesley I. Shank
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December, 1971

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The residence is a typical example of domestic architecture built in Indianapolis prior to the turn of the century. It is located in Lockerbie Square historic district. The building is small and well proportioned. The architect is unknown.
2. Condition of fabric: Condemned and razed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 21'-2" (two bay north front) x 52'-3" (including rear shed addition and front porch), two-story, L-shaped building.
2. Foundations: 8 1/2 inch-thick brick walls laid in common bond with a header course every 8th course. Four courses equal eleven inches. Bricks are approximately 2 1/4" x 3 7/8". Mortar joints are 3/8" to 1/2".
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Clapboard siding, 4 1/2", exposed face (5 1/2" overall), nailed to 2" x 4" studs at 16" on center. Nailing is with wire cut nails. The clapboards are painted white.

4. Structural system, framing: First floor joists are 2" x 8" at 16" on center, spanning the east wall to the west wall approximately 16' in span with cross-bracing at midspan supporting the dining room and living spaces above. The kitchen at the south end of the residence is supported by 2" x 8" joists at 16" on center, spanning from the south (outside) wall to the north (interior) wall.
5. Porch and shed:
 - a. Front porch (North Elevation): The roof is supported by three Tuscan columns 10" in diameter at the base. The porch has a brick foundation and measures 9' x 16'-3 1/2".
 - b. Rear shed: An analysis of the existing clapboarding indicated that the rear shed section was not part of the original construction. It is now used as the kitchen.
6. Chimneys: There is a red brick chimney on the east wall. It has no distinguishing features. There is also a red brick chimney located on the south wall of the kitchen. This chimney also has no distinguishing features and has been sealed.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The front door in the north elevation appears to be original. It is a simple two-paneled oak door: the upper panel is a glass light, and the lower panel is of recessed wood. The lower edge of the light is defined by a 2" wooden trim piece. The door is painted brown and has a porcelain knob with metal works.
 - b. Windows: Double-hung wood in sash windows. The number of lights varies.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof over the front portion of the house with the ridge running on a north-south axis intersects a hip roof over the rear portion of the house with the ridge running on an east-west axis. The roof rafters are 2" x 4" at 16" on center, supporting a wooden roof deck. A simple shed roof covers the addition at the rear of the building. Asphalt roofing covers the roof; the original shingle type is unknown.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: The underside of the rafters is exposed and the rafters project out one foot. They are sawn to

emulate a series of wooden scrolls. There are three wooden scrolled brackets on the north elevation under the eaves at the ridge and on either side of the building at the roof line.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: A small space at the south end of the residence under the kitchen has brick walls and earthen floor. This is used as the stairway to the basement and there is a flue on the south wall. There is a central space under the living and dining area with a flue mid-way along the east wall. Constructed of brick, this room is used for the furnace and stoker. There is a crawl space along the west wall of the basement under the extension of the dining room.
- b. First floor: Simple three room arrangement with no hallway; living room, dining room, and kitchen. There is a built in cupboard in the southeast corner of the kitchen. Access to the basement is through the kitchen. A simple stairway on the south wall of the dining room provides access to the second floor. A fireplace is diagonally located in the northeast corner of the dining room. There are three windows along the north (front) wall of the living room. The front door opens directly into the living room.
- c. Second floor: The stairs from the dining room open into a small vestibule which leads directly into two bedrooms and a bath. Both bedrooms have large walk-in closets and the bathroom floor is elevated 4" above the second floor level.

2. Stairways:

- a. Basement stairs: Wooden stringers and treads with open risers. There are 11 treads.
- b. Stairway to second floor: There are 14 treads with simple wooden treads and risers. There are three risers to a landing, a 90 degree turn and eight risers to a second landing, then three risers to the upper floor level. The stairs are oak, and the newel posts are plain. Newels at the landing extend down to form drops.

3. Flooring:

- a. Basement: Earthen floor.

- b. First floor: The oak hardwood floors of the living and dining rooms are of tongue and groove construction. A parquet trim of mahogany in a herringbone pattern is used as decoration. Linoleum flooring was used in the kitchen.
 - c. Second floor: Wooden flooring covered with linoleum.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes:
- a. Basement: Brick walls laid in common bond with no finished ceiling (exposed wood joists).
 - b. First floor: The living room walls and ceilings are wooden lath, plastered and covered with wallpaper. The wallpaper is solid color. The dining room walls and ceilings are plastered and covered with floral paper. The kitchen has a wainscot covering the south and east wall which is painted white.
 - c. Second floor: The three rooms and vestibule have plastered walls and ceiling. In the north bedroom, the closet is covered with floral patterned wallpaper.
5. Doorways and doors: Most of the interior wooden paneled doors appear to be original. The interior door and window trim is of two basic types. In the upper-story windows and doors a simple board is used to define both the head and jambs 1" x 4". The insertion of quarter circle blocks at the corners between the head and jambs provides simple decoration. The downstairs windows and doors have 1" x 4" jambs and 1" x 6" heads. The top of the door jamb is decorated by a 2" wooden trim piece.
6. Notable hardware: Most of the original hardware has been removed.
7. Mechanical equipment:
- a. Heating: A coal furnace is still in the basement.
 - b. Lighting: Most of the fixtures have been removed, those remaining are not significant.
 - c. Plumbing: All the fixtures have been removed except the water closet and lavatory in the upstairs bath.
- D. Site and Surrounding Land:
- 1. General setting: The north elevation is the street facade.

A sidewalk leads up to the porch from the street.

Prepared by C. David Toth and
Phillip P. Wisley (students)
College of Architecture and Planning
Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana, 1970

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was financed by joint funds of the National Park Service and the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. Reports were prepared under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey by Wesley I. Shank, Associate Professor of Architecture, Iowa State University and by David R. Hermansen, Professor of Architecture, Ball State University. Drawings and architectural information were assembled by Professor Hermansen's students, David Toth and Phillip P. Wisley, during the academic year in partial fulfillment of their academic requirements as students in the College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University. This material was Edited for HABS by Candace Reed in 1977.